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ACE Paper 5/2024
For advice on 22 April 2024

**Report on the 158th Environmental Impact Assessment
Subcommittee Meeting**

PURPOSE

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Subcommittee considered the EIA report on “**San Tin / Lok Ma Chau Development Node**” (the Project) submitted under Section 6(2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) at the meeting on 18 March 2024. The EIA report was submitted by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) (the Project Proponent).

2. Members are requested to note the views of the EIA Subcommittee and advise on whether the EIA report should be endorsed.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

3. The 2013 Policy Address first stated the need to take forward further development of the New Territories North with a view to developing a modern new town. The National 14th Five-Year Plan supports Hong Kong to develop into an international innovation and technology (I&T) center. Located at the heart of Northern Metropolis and in close proximity to Shenzhen (SZ)’s I&T zone in Huanggang and Futian, San Tin Technopole is strategically positioned to be a hub for clustered I&T development that creates synergy with SZ. The San Tin Technopole will increase land supply for I&T development as well as housing supply to help address housing shortage in the territory, among which some of the units can be used as talent apartments for I&T enterprises and research institutes.

4. Please refer to ACE-EIA Paper 1/2024 (*Annex A*) for details of the EIA project.

VIEWS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

5. Members noted that the EIA report was made available for public inspection during the period from 2 February to 2 March 2024. During the

inspection period, a total of 50 public comments were received by EPD. All public comments were submitted to Members of the EIA Subcommittee for consideration before its meeting.

6. Relevant extract of the minutes of the EIA Subcommittee meeting held on 18 March 2024 is at *Annex B*.

VIEWS OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

7. The Director of Environmental Protection (DEP), in consultation with relevant authorities, considered that the EIA report has met the requirements in the EIA Study Brief and the Technical Memorandum on EIA Process, for the purpose of its exhibition for public inspection under Section 7(4) of the EIAO.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

8. Having regard to the findings of the EIA report and information provided by the Project Proponent and its consultants, the EIA Subcommittee recommended the full Council to endorse the EIA report with the following conditions and recommendations –

Conditions of Endorsement

The Project Proponent shall –

- (a) submit a detailed HCMP as recommended in the EIA Report to the DEP for approval no less than nine months before commencement of pond filling works of the Project. The Project Proponent shall consult ACE in finalising the HCMP prior to submission. The HCMP should provide details on ecological impacts, specifications for the target habitats and species, mitigation and compensation measures including provision of birds' flight paths, wildlife corridors for non-flying mammals, wetlands compensation, protection of existing egrettries, design and implementation methods, management strategy, monitoring requirements (e.g. location, frequency and parameters) and reporting requirements, Action / Limit Levels and Event / Action Plan, as well as overall implementation programme, with a view to ensuring no net loss in ecological function and capacity of the wetlands concerned under the Project;
- (b) submit a Detailed Design Plan for Establishment of Wildlife Corridors (DDP) for non-flying mammals and related measures to the DEP for approval before commencement of construction of relevant parts of the Project affecting the existing wildlife corridor(s). Aboveground wildlife corridors with water features and dimension of no less than 10m wide, and underpass wildlife corridors with cross-sectional area of no less than 6m² (2m high and 3m wide, subject to detailed design) with water features and

natural lighting shall be provided. To facilitate free movement of Eurasian Otters across Lok Ma Chau, Sam Po Shue and the Inner Deep Bay area, the DDP shall devise measures such as widening of the gaps in the grille of the underwater channel connecting the Shenzhen River, modifying the inflatable dam at San Tin Main Eastern Drainage Channel and provision of passage (e.g. ladder) through the flap valve and inflatable dam;

- (c) in consultation with AFCD, submit an Implementation Plan for Wetland Enhancement Measures at Mai Po (IPM) as set out in the approved EIA Report to the DEP for approval before commencement of construction of the Project;
- (d) in consultation with AFCD, submit an Interim Wetland Enhancement Plan (IWEP) to the DEP for approval before commencement of pond filling works of the Project. The IWEP shall provide the implementation details of the interim wetland enhancement measures for the identified ponds, including active management such as trash fish stocking, as set out in the approved EIA Report;
- (e) set up an Environmental Committee before commencement of construction of the Project to advise on the preparation of the IWEP, IPM, DDP and HCMP, and monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the proposed ecological mitigation / enhancement measures of the Project according to the EIA Report and the approved IWEP, IPM, DDP and HCMP. The Environmental Committee should have a wide representation such as representatives of relevant government departments as well as green groups and academics;
- (f) report regularly to the ACE after commencement of construction of the Project on the progress of implementation of the approved IWEP, IPM, HCMP and DDP, the environmental monitoring results and effectiveness of ecological mitigation / enhancement measures; and
- (g) confirm the land contamination potential within the Project area and if remediation was necessary, submit a Remediation Action Plan (RAP) to DEP for approval. The latest international practice and proven environmentally friendly methods / technologies should be considered in the RAP for devising the remediation strategies that best suit the site conditions and remediation requirements. The Project Proponent should conduct the remediation in accordance with the approved RAP.

Recommendations

The Project Proponent is recommended to –

- (h) adopt bird-friendly design for buildings within the Project area, such as the use of non-transparent or non-glaring materials at building facades, to

minimise the impacts on avifauna;

- (i) adopt sponge city measures with a modern stormwater management approach to minimise flooding risk of the Project area during heavy rain storms and extreme weather conditions;
- (j) explore the feasibility of implementation of automatic refuse collection systems;
- (k) explore the feasibility of biomass management by reusing and upcycling of the felled trees from the Project area;
- (l) explore ways to achieve carbon neutrality in the Project during both construction and operation phases, such as the use of low-carbon construction materials / equipment, green fuel (e.g. hydrogen), electric vehicles, and the adoption of microgrid;
- (m) explore the feasibility to adopt green design in the Project area by incorporating green roof / wall and passive design in buildings, and designating areas for establishment of urban farms;
- (n) devise specific and effective measures, such as directing outdoor lightings and arranging outdoor light-emitting diode (LED) advertisements away from sensitive receivers, and prohibiting the use of flood lights, to minimise impacts on wildlife due to light pollution during construction and operation phases of the Project; and
- (o) encourage plantation of food crops which may attract insects and birds to enrich the urban biodiversity in the open space zoning within the Project area.

9. Members of the EIA Subcommittee agreed that the Project Proponent should be invited to attend the subsequent ACE meeting to present and explain the project details to the full Council.

EIA Subcommittee Secretariat
April 2024